

Maine *Learning Results* Review Advisory Committee

Minutes

December 16, 2004

1:00 – 4:00 PM

Room 103 B, Cross Building

Meeting goal: The primary goal of this meeting was to convene the group, develop a common understanding of the role of the committee and the research done by the Department of Education and to establish a direction for the next stage of the work.

Introductions: In attendance: Karoldene Barnes, Anita Bernhardt, Richard Coyle, Dean Crocker, John Dorrer, Francis Eberle, Bonnie Fortini, Deborah Howard, Janice LaChance, Tom Major, Bette Manchester, Ellie Multer, Josh Nadel, MaryJo O'Connor (represented by Jeanne Whynot-Vickers, Patrick Phillips, Peggy Rotundo, Harriet Trafford, John Wright, Janet Yancey-Wrona

Framing the work - Patrick Phillips, Deputy Commissioner connected the Learning Results review work to other initiatives at the Department of Education and the State of Maine. He underscored the importance of this review effort. Deputy Commissioner Phillips acknowledged his Co-Chair, MaryJo O'Connor and introduced the Distinguished Educator, Anita Bernhardt, who will play a primary role in facilitating meetings and coordinating the review work.

Charge from the Commissioner - Anita Bernhardt outlined norms for the group's interaction. Josh Nadel added one norm and the group accepted the following as a set of group norms. Each member agreed to:

- Dialogue with others to seek understanding rather than discuss ideas to defend territory.
- Learn together
- Publicly support the accepted positions of the Committee

- Honor dates and times for meetings
- Monitor “air time” in meetings
- Avoid the use of acronyms and jargon

Anita described the scope of the work and the groups that will be included in the work at a variety of levels (see page 10 of blue tab). She identified the *Learning Results* Steering Committee as the policy-making group for the review and the *Learning Results* Review Advisory Committee as the group that will define, with input from other stakeholders, the organization for the work and the protocols that will ensure that all content areas of the Maine *Learning Results* are given similar consideration during the review process.

Anita admonished the group to let the ideas they share speak for the constituencies they represent.

The group read the Maine *Learning Results* Review Advisory Committee Charter. Anita noted that the group will be convened for eighteen months, expects to meet twice monthly and will use consensus to make decisions. However, the co-chairs have authority to request a majority vote in instance where consensus obviously inhibits forward progress.

Assumptions about the review process – Anita requested that group members take five minutes to discuss their assumptions/thoughts/questions about the work of the review with the committee member seated beside them. The ideas listed below reflect the content of those partnered conversations and the full committee conversation that followed.

Questions

- Where are we engaging school boards in conversations about education and where will this work connect back to help inform and support their work?
- Will we be able to examine a performance card for the current *Learning Results*? (Consider looking at the Surveys of Enacted Curriculum, Maine Educational Assessment, and Local Assessment Systems data)
- What is the role of the Guiding Principles in this work?
- How does one size fits all apply to the kids of Maine? Not all are post-secondary bound nor is it necessary that they be.

- What does it mean to this process and our Learning Results if, as Daggett suggests, the knowledge and skills required for technical careers is higher than those required for post-secondary academic success?

Comments

- The Guiding Principles are aligned with the expectations of the workplace.
- Foreign Languages, cultural studies and the connection to a global economy is undervalued.
- This work is connected to teacher preparation and certification.
- Every child's educational success is important to their own future and to the future of Maine's economy.

Assumptions

- The product we generate must reflect the huge weight currently on schools. This review cannot increase that burden.
- The *Learning Results* Review Advisory Committee will have to trust that the Maine Department of Education is offering an honest picture of the research and ideas that should influence the review.
- There will be adequate time and vehicles for input for stakeholder groups to have voice in the process.
- The work will reflect a rapidly changing economic and social environment in Maine and will reflect this in the goals for the work.
- Grappling with what is "essential" content and skills will be very difficult.
- The knowledge of the business community will be tapped to help define the future needs of students.
- The *Learning Results* is a part of a larger system of education and this will be reflected in the work.
- The standards will be linked to real-life applications and assessments.
- Because we cannot really imagine the future, it is important that we teach students how to learn. This should be reflected in the Maine *Learning Results*.

- This work will envision the future.
- We will find the integrating points of the standards.
- We will be mindful of “ALL” kids and provide access for students with disabilities and English Language Learners.
- We will stay grounded in the big picture.
- We will consider the role of technology literacy in the *Learning Results*.
- There will be opportunities to consider other state and national standards documents.
- There will be rigor in what we asked students to know and be able to do.
- We will be attentive to national battle grounds (ie. Math Wars. . .)
- There will be a strong alignment between the preparation provided by the high schools and the expectations of the universities.
- There will be a clear and effective communication with stakeholder groups. (The *Learning Results* Review Advisory Committee will generate strategies to make this happen.)
- The understanding that our most highly educated workforce in the history of the Maine economy is getting ready to retire will provide us with the incentive to address this education challenge and opportunity.
- We will take advantage of the opportunity to improve the “lot” of Maine by integrating education into a bigger economic picture.

Overview of the work since August 2004 – Anita provide an overview of the research completed since the end of August 2004. (Please see the blue tab). She highlighted the documents, consultations and internal interviews reviewed or conducted with the Maine Department of Education and summarize key points. Anita also shared the list of consensus ideas generated by the research, consultations and internal scans. The ideas listed should inform the group thinking not act as a set of guidelines. Eventually the *Learning Results* Review Advisory Committee will generate a list of guiding values and beliefs to guide the work.

Overview of January 24/25 - Patrick provided an overview of the January 24/25, 2004 symposium. On January 24 the Department of Education, in conjunction with other State agencies, will host presentations by Bill Daggett, Seymour Papert, Alan November and Marc Tucker. On January 25 the same groups will organize discussion/work groups to connect the ideas to existing or future work.

Website information – Anita shared the web address for the Maine Learning Results Review. All minutes and agendas can be accessed from the website.

Meeting dates from January – June and volunteer to take minutes – In lieu of a meeting in January all committee members should attend one or both of the symposium days in January. Patrick and Anita advised individuals who can attend only one of the days to attend on January 24, 2004. The Maine Department of Education will send an invitation to all members of the *Learning Results* Review Advisory Committee. The group set aside the following dates and times for meetings in 2005: February 8, March 3, March 24, April 21 and May 5. The February 8th meeting will begin at 9:00 and run through 3:00 with lunch included. All other meetings are currently scheduled from 9:00 - 3:00. Anita will provide minutes for this meeting and Janice LaChance will provide minutes for the meeting on February 8th.

Agenda items and preparation for next meeting – In preparation for the February 8th meeting Anita asked participants (1) to review the summaries of the consultations conducted by Maine Department of Education (orange tab), (2) to read the two Daggett articles found in the yellow tab and to highlight points that resonate with your thinking or provoke your thinking and (3) to bookmark the Maine Learning Results Review website and review the materials posted on the site.

Member of the group noted that:

- Our planning needs to incorporate a short break in the meeting.
- Each meeting should begin with a brief review of the discussion from the last meeting.

- Our opportunity to learn together needs to consider (1) what “all” means, (2) How and for what purposes we assess the Learning Results, (3) what is causing the dissent among the public and (4) what do we know about the performance of the Learning Results.